

Class I, HEXAPODA.

Order II. COLEOPTERA.

A SPECIES OF THE TENEBRIONID GENUS
LATHETICUS IN THE UNITED STATES.

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For many years there were present in the British Museum specimens of an unidentified genus of Tenebrionidæ. The species awaited description until the year 1880, when Mr. C. O. Waterhouse ventured its characterization as *Latheticus oryzae* in Volume V of the Annals and Magazine of Natural History (fifth ser., pp. 147-148).

March 3, 1897, the late H. G. Hubbard collected in the Colorado desert, at Indio, in Riverside county, in southern California, a series of a species at once recognizable as related to *L. oryzae* both by the description and the illustration published in "Aid to the Classification of Insects" (Plate 15). A brief notice of this was given by Mr. E. A. Schwarz before the Entomological Society of Washington, May 13, 1897 (Proc. Ent. Soc. Wash., Vol. IV, p. 187). Other specimens were reared in 1902 by Messrs. H. S. Barber and E. A. Schwarz from dead mesquite branches at Hot Springs, Yavapai county, Arizona.

It is remarkable that an American species of this genus should exist while no other than the oriental form which has hitherto represented the genus has been discovered. It serves to accentuate the Asiatic character of the fauna of the arid region of southwestern North America.

Specimens of *L. oryzae* taken from a London granary have been kindly furnished by Mr. G. C. Champion for comparison.

Before proceeding to its description Waterhouse's definition of the genus may be repeated as it is published where not accessible to many American collectors.

Genus **LATHETICUS** Waterhouse, 1880.

General form of *Tribolium*. Mentum transverse, the anterior angles rounded, the front margin gently emarginate in the middle, the ligula not much projecting, transverse, emarginate in the middle; the labial palpi short, the apical joint very large, one third longer than broad, subparallel (but narrowed at the base), truncate at the apex. The inner lobe of the maxillæ terminating in a very slender, acute hook,

with a broad fringe within; the outer lobe slender, terminating with curved stiff hairs; the palpi stout, the penultimate joint subquadrate, the apical joint about twice and a half as long as broad, cylindrical, narrowed at the apex. Labrum extremely short. Epistoma trapeziform, emarginate anteriorly, the ocular canthus not projecting laterally beyond the eyes. Eyes moderately prominent, very coarsely granular. Antennæ nearly as long as the head; the two basal joints not visible from above; the third joint the narrowest, about as long as broad; the fourth, fifth and sixth joints transverse, each a trifle broader than the preceding, the seventh joint distinctly larger than the sixth; the eighth the largest (still transverse), the ninth and tenth a little narrower than the eighth; the eleventh still narrower, somewhat flattened, obliquely truncate at its apex. The rest as in *Tribolium*.

Latheticus prosopis, new species. (Fig. 3.)

Body four times as long as wide, sides parallel, moderately convex above, pale brownish-yellow, surface moderately polished. Head prominent, only slightly narrower than the prothorax. Front and epistoma moderately convex, nearly twice as wide as long, gradually narrowing, declivous anteriorly and at sides, anterior margin narrowly reflexed, ocular canthus prominent, encroaching somewhat upon the eye. Eyes rather finely granulate, above very narrow, below separated by a space about two and one-half times the oblique (longest) diameter of one eye. Mandibles prominent, acutely and finely bifid at apex, inner portion with feebly marked tooth. Antennæ with first six joints about as long as club, second joint visible from above. Prothorax about as long as wide, rounded anteriorly, considerably narrowing posteriorly, with base much narrower than the elytra, angles acute, surface not so densely punctured as in *oryzæ*, base and sides very finely margined. Elytra of same width as prothorax at its widest part, about two and one third times as long as wide, sides parallel, acutely angulate at base; each elytron with six or seven less regular, scarcely impressed rows of punctures. Punctuation of the prosternum more dense than in *oryzæ*, otherwise with the exception of the prothorax and elytra the punctuation throughout is scarcely different. Length, 2.7-3.0 mm.; width, 0.7-0.75 mm.

Habitat. — Indio, Cal., and Hot Springs, Ariz., under bark of a dead mesquite (*Prosopis juliflora*).

Type. — No. 7895, U. S. National Museum.

The general appearance, color and punctuation is very similar to the Asiatic *L. oryzæ*, but the body is a little more slender, the length of the latter being less than four times the width, while the thorax is longer, as are also the antennæ. The eyes are very much smaller. The mandibles are more prominent than in *oryzæ* and the inner tooth is very weak in comparison. In the latter it is strongly developed.

It is evident that the dentate apices of the mandibles is a generic character previously overlooked because the mandibles are less prominent in *oryzæ*.



FIG. 3.